

EVALUATION OF THE MAINE MEMORY NETWORK

Prepared for:

Maine Historical Society

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INTRODUCTION

Background on the Maine Memory Network

The Maine Memory Network (MMN), created by the Maine Historical Society, is an Internet site that makes the rich treasure of Maine's historic documents, images, maps, photographs, and stories available to the public at large. Rather than focusing solely on the collections of the Maine Historical Society, the sponsor of the site, the Network is innovative in its effort to engage institutional partners from throughout Maine. The Network is an attempt to create in one site access to a wide variety of historical and cultural resources that relate to the state's history. The focus of the project is to preserve Maine's historic assets through assisting communities and cultural organizations in digitizing significant collections and disseminating digital cataloging standards. In addition, it will make primary images of Maine's history accessible to residents throughout the state.

As it is designed, the Maine Memory Network allows partnering institutions to upload and catalogue documents on the site. Visitors to the site are able to search the site and view documents that include a variety of media including photos, letters, artifacts, sound, and video files. Visitors are also able to create their own albums made up of photographs and other information from the site and are able to purchase a print or high-resolution scan. Finally, teachers and students are able to create and share online exhibits, albums, and slide shows. MMN staff have also created lesson plans that utilize the resources on the site as part of a classroom lesson.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The major purpose of this evaluation is to examine whether or not the Maine Historical Society has made progress towards achieving the goals of the Maine Memory Network that were set out in its proposal to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. At the most basic level, the evaluation is asking whether certain benchmarks have been reached. Has the Maine Memory Network met its targets in terms of program "outputs" and "outcomes?"¹ In terms of program "outputs", the evaluation looked at the quality and

Maine Memory Network Program Outputs

- 1) Products developed: i.e., training manuals, procedures, lesson plans.
- 2) Number of organizations visited and trained.
- 3) Number of organizations agreeing to be participating partners.
- 4) Number of items scanned and added to the network.
- 5) Number of schools reached.
- 6) Number of visitors to the site.

¹ By program outputs, we mean the products of a program's activities; by outcomes, we mean the changes related to those outputs.

scale of the MMN activities to date. But the evaluation goes beyond these program outputs, and assesses progress in achieving some of the explicit, as well as implicit, “outcomes” associated with the effort.

Finally, the hope for this evaluation is that it would be a learning process. In addition to identifying what has been achieved, the evaluation has sought to identify some of the factors that have affected the performance of the project. Through identifying some of the barriers that the MMN faced in implementation, as well as some of the areas in which it has been successful, the intention is to provide feedback to MMN staff so that they can improve their performance in the future, as well as provide some guidance to other states and organizations that are operating online historic sites or are interested in digitizing historical documents.

Long-term Anticipated Outcomes of the Maine Memory Network

- 1) To eliminate geographic barriers to the use and appreciation of important historical and cultural information.
- 2) To facilitate education uses for such information in and out of the classroom.
- 3) To benefit the cause of history and increase community pride by creating a partnership between small rural and larger urban collection institutions.

Given the outcomes that were identified by the staff of the MMN, the evaluation has sought to answer the following questions:

- ▲ Has the MMN engaged cultural institutions from throughout the state?
- ▲ Has the MMN been used by individuals throughout Maine?
- ▲ Have teachers and students used the Network for educational purposes and has this use been tied to the learning outcomes?
- ▲ Has the Network led to an increased appreciation of historical assets within Maine?
- ▲ Have new partnerships or institutional relationships been forged between small historic and cultural institutions and other organizations within communities or in the state?
- ▲ Has the Network led to increases in the overall capacity within Maine to manage historic documents and images?

Methodology

Given the complexity of the factors affecting the success of the Maine Memory Network in achieving its long-term outcomes, this evaluation was based on multiple sources of information. The methodology involved:

- ▲ Interviews with program staff at the beginning of the project and at the end of the Department of Commerce grant period.
- ▲ A survey of contributing partners. Surveys were sent out to 58 of the organizations that were “Participating Partners” as of March 2003—37 responses were received.
- ▲ A survey of potential partners. Surveys were sent out to 226 cultural institutions in the state—79 responses were received.

- ▲ A survey of visitors to the site. A survey instrument was put on the MMN site for the period from March 7 to May 23, 2003. A total of 807 responses were received.
- ▲ A limited survey of educators. Surveys were sent out to a sample of teachers and educators who were on the MMN contact database. Responses were received from 16 educators.
- ▲ In person and telephone interviews with individual stakeholders for both small and large cultural institutions in Maine.

The full results of the surveys are included as Appendix A.

Since it was not possible to collect new, primary data on the program, the quantitative analysis was dependent on the information provided by Maine Memory Network staff. However, Mt. Auburn Associates, to the extent possible, did try to verify data on the program through multiple sources and examination of primary data.

SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING PROJECT OUTPUTS: ACTIVITIES TO DATE

History of the Maine Memory Network

Phase One: Seeding the Network

The Maine Memory Network was established by and is overseen by the Maine Historical Society, a private nonprofit organization that was created in 1822 to be a library, archives, and museum, and to provide a comprehensive resource for scholarship related to the state of Maine. At the turn of the century, the Society was given the Longfellow House and land for the library in Portland. Prior to the creation of the Maine Memory Network, the Society had four programmatic areas: providing research and library services for the study of Maine's history; operating the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the collections of the House, and the Maine History Gallery; providing education outreach services that focus on Maine history; and publishing documents, essays, and books on Maine's past.

The Maine Memory Network evolved as the contribution of the Maine Historical Society to the state's New Century Community Program (NCCP). The New Century Community Program was created by an act of the Maine State Legislature in 1999, following a year spent on program design and educating policymakers by the Maine Cultural Affairs Council (MCAC), a collaborative made up of the Maine Arts Commission, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine State Library, Maine State Museum, Maine Historical Society, Maine State Archives, and the Maine Humanities Council. The program's grantmaking, direct service, and technical assistance activities focused on three areas: advancing the economic and social development of Maine's communities by strengthening their arts and cultural resources; expanding access to education resources; and preserving Maine's historic resources—properties, artifacts, and documents.

In considering its role in the New Century Community Program, the Historical Society realized that what it had to offer the state was its collection. While people could access the collection in Portland, the rest of the state was deprived of it. Rather than develop a separate grantmaking or service delivery program like the other partners, the Historical Society focused on finding a way to share its wealth with everyone in the state. As a result, the Historical Society developed a fifth major programmatic area, the Maine Memory Network, whose startup was funded entirely through the \$220,000 allocated through the New Century Community Program.

The Network was thought to be particularly important in a state such as Maine, which is very large geographically, largely rural, and includes a strong institutional base of organizations interested in preserving its history. At the time the Network was established, the state had 223 historical societies, 77 museums, 288 libraries, and five archives. There were a number of problems posed by the existing infrastructure of organizations. First,

because the state is so large, many of the state's historical and cultural assets were difficult to access by much of the state's population. For the state's rural population, there was very limited ability to access the collections of many of the state's larger historical and cultural institutions. For the urban residents of Maine, there was the inability to access the documents and artifacts located in remote parts of the state. Moreover, many critical historical documents and materials were located in institutions with very limited capacity to preserve them—putting the documents themselves in danger of being lost. The Maine Memory Network was conceived to address this problem and to address the geographic isolation in the state as well as to ensure that key documents were preserved, to be appreciated by future generations.

The seed funding from the New Century Community Program allowed the Maine Historical Society to hire a project director and to develop the basic prototype for the Website. Project staff spent the first year creating the Web interface, input system, cataloguing standards, and interactive tools. In addition, staff started the process of digitizing materials in the Maine Historical Society collections. In the summer of 2001, the Maine Memory Network was unveiled and was put online.

Phase Two: Creating the Partnership Network and Bringing the Network to Scale

Based upon its initial startup work, the Maine Historic Society received a \$377,000 grant through the federal Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to support the further development of the Maine Memory Network. The grant was to be used to create a partnership network through a system of outreach and education, to expand the content uploaded on the site, and to undertake an outreach effort to promote the use of the Network for educational purposes in the state. The period of the grant was October 1, 2001 to September 30, 2003. This report primarily focuses on evaluating the success of the Maine Memory Network in achieving the outcomes that were anticipated in the proposal to the Department of Commerce.

In addition to the NTIA grant, the Network has received additional support for its operations from the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS). It received a \$440,000 National Leadership Grant for Museums from the IMLS to further support the editorial and educational activities related to the Network and to provide local cultural organizations with software, training, and support to assist them in scanning, uploading, cataloguing, and managing items from their collections. In addition to these large grants, the MMN has received a number of small grants and contributions from individuals.

Meeting Initial Output Objectives

In the application to the Department of Commerce, the Maine Historical Society set out a number of specific benchmarks. Its objectives were as follows:

- ▲ visit 200 cultural, education, and collecting organizations;
- ▲ recruit 100 contributing partners, training them in scanning and cataloging; and

▲ have each partner upload 160 images for a total of 50,000 images.

Clearly, the Maine Memory Network set out with an ambitious plan. Following its startup phase, the major challenges faced by the staff were:

1. *creating content online through engaging contributing partners;*
2. *ensuring the quality of the content on the site;*
3. *reaching and engaging the educational community; and*
4. *creating an audience for the site.*

In order to meet these challenges, MMN staff focused considerable time and resources to meeting the needs of the state's cultural and historical institutions. Most notably, the staff designed a program focused on long-term institution building rather than on uploading large quantities of items on the Maine Memory site.

As the Network evolved, it became clear that there would be considerable challenges to achieving the output objectives that they had set out. The MMN staff had to make a fundamental decision early on—would its focus be on achieving these numbers, or would the focus be on ensuring the long-term quality and sustainability of the Network. As this section will discuss, the Maine Memory Network staff opted for the second alternative. They built a program with a strong orientation towards quality of content, rather than quantity. The focus has been on achieving some of the long-term “outcomes,” at times at the expense of achieving some of the short-term “outputs” that it had initially anticipated. As a result, the initial output objectives have not been met. However, the MMN has created the “infrastructure” to ensure that it is on the path to achieving some of the longer-term outcomes.

The following section outlines some of the key findings related to the challenges faced by MMN in achieving the output objectives that it had set out in its application to the Department of Commerce.

Developing Online Content through Engaging Contributing Partners

A review of the data provided by Maine Memory Network staff, as well as the survey of contributing partners and potential partners, resulted in the following key findings:

While MMN has been successful in achieving its outreach objectives, it has fallen far short of achieving its objectives in terms of the number of items on the site.

To date, the MMN has achieved the following “outputs” in terms of engaging partners:

- ▲ 250 organizations visited or attended demonstrations;
- ▲ 59 organizations involved in direct training;
- ▲ 115 organizations applied to be partners;
- ▲ 69 organizations are contributing partners with content online;

- ▲ 10 organizations are contributing partners in the process of providing online content;
- ▲ 3,963 images are online, 141 images have been submitted but have not gone through the quality control process, and 883 images are partially completed;
- ▲ 33 percent of the content of the Website has been provided by contributing partners.

While it has met the objectives in terms of its outreach activities, having contacted and engaged over 250 organizations in Maine, it has been less successful in terms of the number of contributing partners that it anticipated having at this point in time, and, most significantly, it is far from reaching its objectives in terms of the number of actual images online.

MMN has developed an effective outreach program that engages contributing partners and builds their capacity to be effective contributors of quality content.

MMN realized early in its development that it needed to be somewhat aggressive in its outreach activities. It realized that MMN could not engage local partners by simply mailing out marketing materials. Staff recognized that given the limited capacity of most of the cultural institutions in Maine, it was not sufficient to send out a training manual; they were going to have to walk potential partners through the process.

Given this approach, MMN developed an effective outreach effort. This effort included inviting local organizations to regional demonstrations. Usually, between three and 10 organizations would attend these meetings. Following these meetings, the MMN staff provided technical assistance around a range of issues including:

- ▲ digitizing and scanning;
- ▲ administration of images online; and
- ▲ cataloguing of documents.


Most significantly, the MMN hired two part-time regional outreach coordinators who worked in the more rural parts of the state to market the program and to provide technical assistance to potential partners. These coordinators were critical because they understood their regions and were able to build upon relationships and sustain contacts.

The surveys and interviews with cultural and historical institutions in Maine provide strong evidence that MMN staff have engaged in a high quality and extensive outreach effort throughout the state.

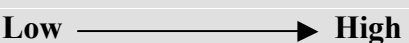
Maine Memory Network Staff			
▲	Project Director		
▲	Part-time Project Cataloguer		
▲	Full-time Outreach Coordinator		
▲	Full-time Project Historian		
▲	2 part-time Regional Outreach Coordinators		
▲	Part-time Web Technical Assistant		

Organizations that have worked with MMN rate the quality of its services very highly.

The survey of contributing partners and potential partners asked about the quality of the services that had been provided by the Maine Memory Network. In general, those organizations that have had contact with the MMN staff have rated the services very highly. Participating partners were extremely positive about the one-on-one assistance that they received, as well as the overall responsive of the staff. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Contributing Partners: Rank Your Experience in Working with the MMN							
						N/A	N=
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	N=
Initial Contact	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%	21.6%	67.6%	2.7%	37
Regional Training Demonstration	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	22.2%	44.4%	30.6%	36
Training Manual	0.0%	2.9%	20.6%	29.4%	29.4%	17.6%	34
One-on-One Assistance	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	36
Overall Responsiveness of Staff	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	11.1%	83.3%	2.8%	36
<i>Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' Survey of MMN Contributing Partners</i>							

The potential partners—organizations that have had some initial contact with the MMN through outreach activities—also were generally positive about their experiences. Almost all of those surveyed ranked their initial contact with staff very high on a scale of 1 to 5. The regional demonstrations were also ranked highly. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Potential Partners: Rank Your Experience in Working with the MMN							
						N/A	N=
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	N=
Initial Contact	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	24.6%	67.7%	4.6%	65
Initial Training	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	17.2%	34.5%	43.1%	58
Regional Demonstration	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	21.0%	45.2%	32.3%	62
Outreach Meeting or Conference	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	40.0%	41.7%	60
Training Manual	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%	8.6%	20.7%	63.8%	58
Ongoing Support and Assistance	1.7%	0.0%	1.7%	15.5%	24.1%	56.9%	58
Overall Responsiveness of Staff	1.7%	0.0%	3.3%	13.3%	55.0%	26.7%	60
<i>Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' Survey of MMN Potential Partners</i>							

Finally, 13 of the educators who responded to the survey of the education community had had direct contact with MMN staff. Of these, 11 ranked their experience

working with the staff as a “5” on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest) and two ranked their experience as “4.” A number of the teachers commented on the quality of the staff. For example, one teacher made a point of describing the staff as “informed, competent, and engaging.”

MMN has maintained extremely high quality standards in the items that it has placed online.

As noted, MMN has devoted considerable attention to ensuring that the items that are on the Network are of high quality. There are three ways in which MMN has focused on quality:

1. The quality of the scan itself is of very high quality.
2. The focus on only including items of historical significance.
3. The requirement that each item on the site be accompanied by a detailed description that highlights its historical context.

MMN is somewhat unique in its orientation toward the quality of items that it uploads on the Network. Given its commitment to quality, staff recognized that the success of the Network depended fundamentally on the capacity of the potential contributing partners to the Network. As a result, one of the first products produced by the staff was an extremely in depth user manual. One of the purposes of this manual is to provide for some quality control as well as to build capacity. This manual is a significant product of the MMN activities and has been widely used by cultural institutions throughout the state. The manual provides institutions with limited capacity with a very hands-on instruction related to how to scan documents and photographs, how to catalogue documents online, resources for handling materials, and information on legal and other requirements associated with working online. This manual has proved to be an invaluable resource for organizations interested in entering the digital age.

In addition to supporting the capacity of its partners to provide high quality documents and cataloguing, the MMN has been involved in extensive efforts to ensure that the items that are on the Network are of very high quality and are able to be used. For example, the site includes 227 transcriptions, ranging from a one-page letter to a 60-page diary. These transcriptions are extremely time-consuming. Every handwritten item needs to be fully transcribed and is accompanied by a detailed description.

Engaging Educators and Creating Content for the Educational Community

The effort to engage the educational community involved a distinct approach by MMN. As a result, MMN hired a half-time staff person who was responsible for developing relationships with schools and developing content related to the state’s educational needs. To engage the educational community, MMN undertook a number of activities:

- ▲ mailing flyers to 850 principals;

- ▲ attending teacher conferences and pilot programs; and
- ▲ undertaking demonstrations at schools.

Some of these activities have involved promoting new relationships with local historical societies and the schools in their communities. MMN is looking at these activities as a “community building” effort.

In order to engage schools, the MMN also needed to ensure that the content on the site was relevant to the educational community. It, thus, focused considerable attention on ensuring that the content is useful to teachers. Specifically, MMN has:

- ▲ linked the site to the Maine Learning Results Curriculum guidelines;
- ▲ created links to the statewide Maine textbook *Finding Katadin* and has digitized items from its collection for nine chapters of the book; and
- ▲ created three lesson plans related to items on the site. Currently, two of these lesson plans are online.

Creating the Audience for the Site: Characteristics of Users

Beginning in April 2002, MMN started tracking visits to the site. Since that time, it reports that it averages about 2,679 unique users a month and about 28,059 pages are viewed a month.

For a two-month period, a survey of users was put on the Maine Memory Network site by the evaluation team. During this period, a total of 807 users responded to the survey. The survey provides a good overview of who is visiting the site and the purpose of their visit.

Most of the users have connections to the state of Maine.

While the Maine Memory Network site attracts visitors from all over the United States, most of the visitors to the site have some connection to the state. According to the survey of users, approximately 61 percent of the visitors were residents of the state. There were also a large number of non-residents who had some connection to the state, either owning a second home in Maine, vacationing in Maine, attending college in Maine, growing up in Maine, or having ancestors from Maine. (See Table 3.)

Table 3: Characteristics of Non-Resident Users	
Own Home in Maine	5.6%
Grew Up in Maine	21.1%
Went to College in Maine	7.4%
Vacation in Maine	14.7%
Ancestors from Maine	26.1%
General Interest in Maine	25.1%
	100.0%
Source: MMN User Survey	

Many of the users, particularly those who are not from Maine, define themselves as history buffs, and a large number use the site for genealogical research.

Eighty-four percent of the non-residents and 23 percent of the residents define themselves as history buffs. An area of particular interest seems to be in genealogy. A number of the visitors reported using the site as part of their research on their family history. In fact, genealogical research appears to be an area of considerable interest amongst users of the site.

While the primary means of learning about the Network is through word of mouth and general Internet searching, specific outreach activities have been effective in reaching new visitors.

The period in which the visitor survey was taken probably affected who was visiting the site. This is clear from the information about how the users learned about the Network. Most notably, a TV show on the local PBS affiliates in Maine that mentioned the site created a short-term interest—with about 5 percent of the visitors during this period noting that they heard about the Maine Memory Network from the show. Mention of the site on specific listservs was also noted. Clearly, however, the specific marketing materials of the Maine Memory Network have had an impact, with many of the resident visitors reporting hearing about the site at workshops in which Network staff participated, from materials at the Maine Historical Society, or from reading about the Network in promotional literature. (See Table 4.)

Table 4: How Users Learned About Maine Memory Network			
	Non-Residents	Residents	Total
Friend/Colleague	18.2%	26.2%	23.1%
Internet Search Engine	47.2%	24.9%	33.6%
Link	9.2%	5.0%	6.7%
Listserv	4.3%	1.3%	2.4%
Read About It	11.9%	19.1%	16.3%
Student/Teacher	1.0%	6.1%	4.1%
Workshops	3.0%	6.3%	5.0%
PBS Show	0.0%	5.2%	3.2%
Library/Town	1.3%	1.0%	1.2%
Maine Historical Society	2.0%	3.8%	3.1%
Other	2.0%	1.0%	1.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Source: MMN User Survey			

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROGRAM GOALS: ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES

It is clearly much too early to assess whether or not the Maine Memory Network has achieved the more long-term outcomes that it articulated in its grant application to the Department of Commerce. However, interviews and surveys of cultural organization in Maine, as well as educators, provide evidence that the Network has had wide ranging impacts to date. Some of these impacts are clearly related to the outcomes that the Maine Historical Society articulated in its grant application. Other impacts of the Network were not fully recognized by the Maine Historical Society when it developed the Maine Memory Network.

The three major outcomes that were initially anticipated by the Maine Historical Society were:

1. eliminating geographic barriers to the use and appreciation of important historical and cultural information;
2. facilitating education uses for such information both in and out of the classroom; and
3. benefiting the cause of history and increasing community pride.

However, as the MMN evolved, program staff recognized that there were other unanticipated outcomes that were associated with the Maine Memory Network. The following potential outcomes were recognized once the Network was established:

4. increasing the capacity of small historical and cultural institutions throughout Maine;
5. increasing the capacity of the Maine Historic Society in a number of areas; and
6. influencing other digitization efforts around the United States and serving as a model for similar efforts in other states and regions.

This section reviews the findings related to the potential outcomes associated with the MMN as stated in the proposal to the Department of Commerce, as well as some of the unanticipated outcomes that were identified as the Network evolved.

Outcome 1: To Eliminate Geographic Barriers to the Use and Appreciation of Important Historical and Cultural Information

The issue of geographical isolation is particularly acute in a large, rural state such as Maine. Much of the state's population resides in a handful of the counties in the southern part of the state. The more rural parts of Maine are relatively remote, and often feel that they do not receive sufficient attention by policymakers and by statewide organizations. Given the nature of the state, addressing the geographic barriers has been an important component of the Maine Memory Network.

While it is too early to conclude whether the MMN has been able to achieve the long-term outcome of eliminating the geographic barriers to the use and appreciation of

historical and cultural information, the surveys of users, partners, and potential partners provide strong evidence that MMN has been successful in ensuring that historical items from throughout the state are being made available, that users from throughout Maine have knowledge of the site and are utilizing the resource, and, finally, that small cultural institutions from all regions from the state are being supported in their efforts to participate in the Network.

Users of the site come from throughout Maine roughly in proportion to population concentration in the state.

The survey of users of the site that was completed over a two-month period in 2003 found that residents from throughout the state of Maine have been visiting the MMN Website. While the majority of users are clearly from the southernmost counties of the state, the proportion of users in some of the more remote counties is proportionate with the state's population. (See Table 5.)

Table 5: Geographic Distribution of Resident Users of Maine Memory Network				
	Residence of User	% of Users from Maine	2000 Population	% of State Population
Androscoggin	22	5%	103,793	8%
Aroostook	29	6%	73,938	6%
Cumberland	161	35%	265,612	21%
Franklin	8	2%	29,467	2%
Hancock	19	4%	51,791	4%
Kennebec	38	8%	117,114	9%
Knox	13	3%	39,618	3%
Lincoln	7	2%	33,616	3%
Oxford	21	5%	54,755	4%
Penobscot	35	8%	144,919	11%
Piscataquis	7	2%	17,235	1%
Sagadahoc	19	4%	35,214	3%
Somerset	17	4%	50,888	4%
Waldo	9	2%	36,280	3%
Washington	14	3%	33,941	3%
York	45	10%	186,742	15%
Total	464	100%	1,274,923	100%
<i>Source: MMN User Survey</i>				

The contributing partners come from throughout the state, making historical documents from the more remote parts of the state available to a wider audience.

As noted, the MMN staff have made considerable efforts to reach small cultural organizations and schools in the more rural and remote parts of the state. For example, MMN had a part-time staff person assigned to do outreach and technical assistance in

Aroostock County. Individuals in Aroostock County who were interviewed noted that MMN made considerable effort to involve them. MMN staff have done extensive outreach and have worked with local organizations on a one-on-one basis and, according to one individual interviewed, “Face-to-face contact is very important to those of us who live and work here.”

Having a part-time staff person who worked closely with smaller cultural institutions in the northern part of Maine clearly paid off. Of the 69 organizations that have contributed images to the MMN, 14, or about 20 percent, were from Aroostock County. Moreover, there are contributing partners from every county in Maine with the exception of Lincoln County. The geographic spread of contributing partners is another indication that MMN has made progress in eliminating geographic barriers to the access to historic information in Maine.

Table 6: Participating Partners with Images Online						
Group Name	Town	County	On-Line Images	Pending Images	Offline Images	Total Images
Androscoggin Historical Society	Auburn	Androscoggin	25	0	0	25
Leeds Historical Society	Leeds	Androscoggin	1	0	21	22
Lewiston Public Library	Lewiston	Androscoggin	80	0	45	125
Caribou Public Library	Caribou	Aroostook	3	0	1	4
Nylander Museum	Caribou	Aroostook	5	0	4	9
Fort Kent Historical Society Museum	Fort Kent	Aroostook	16	0	9	25
Fort Kent Public Library	Fort Kent	Aroostook	4	0	4	8
Aroostook County Historical & Art Mus.	Houlton	Aroostook	10	0	23	33
Southern Aroostook Agricultural Museum	Littleton	Aroostook	1	0	0	1
Millinocket Fire Department	Millinocket	Aroostook	6	0	11	17
Oakfield Historical Society	Oakfield	Aroostook	20	7	25	45
Patten Lumbermen's Museum	Patten	Aroostook	333	115	30	363
Mark & Emily Turner Memorial Library	Presque Isle	Aroostook	2	0	1	3
Presque Isle Fire Department	Presque Isle	Aroostook	23	0	1	24
University of Maine at Presque Isle	Presque Isle	Aroostook	16	0	1	17
Saint Agathe Historical Society	St. Agathe	Aroostook	12	0	42	54
L'Heritage Vivant-Living Hist. Soc.	Van Buren	Aroostook	2	0	20	22
Maine Aviation Historical Society	Bangor	Cumberland	1	0	0	1
Pejepscot Historical Society	Brunswick	Cumberland	21	0	4	25
Cumberland Historical Society	Cumberland	Cumberland	14	0	5	19
Freeport Historical Society	Freeport	Cumberland	6	0	0	6
Center for the Study of Lives	Gorham	Cumberland	1	0	0	1
Naples Historical Society	Naples	Cumberland	2	0	7	9
United Society of Shakers	New Gloucester	Cumberland	52	0	2	54
North Yarmouth Historical Society	North Yarmouth	Cumberland	12	0	1	13
Friends of the Kotschmar Organ	Portland	Cumberland	41	0	5	46
Maine Historical Society	Portland	Cumberland	2430	11	127	2557
Maine Medical Center Archives	Portland	Cumberland	37	0	2	39
Portland Public Library	Portland	Cumberland	21	0	1	22
First Parish in Portland, The	Portland	Cumberland	7	0	1	8

Table 6: Participating Partners with Images Online

Pownal Scenic and Hist. Society	Pownal	Cumberland	2	0	0	2
South Portland Public Library	S. Portland	Cumberland	4	0	0	4
Stanley Museum, Inc.	Kingfield	Franklin	52	0	17	69
Buck Memorial Library	Bucksport	Hancock	6	0	0	6
Maine State Archives	Augusta	Kennebec	23	0	0	23
Camp Runoia	Belgrade Lakes	Kennebec	3	3	35	38
Camp Winnebago	Kents Hill	Kennebec	16	0	11	27
Camden Public Library	Camden	Knox	9	0	6	15
Camden-Rockport Historical Society	Rockport	Knox	2	2	0	2
Montpelier, General Henry Knox Museum	Thomaston	Knox	19	2	11	30
Fryeburg Historical Society	Fryeburg	Oxford	16	0	9	25
Fryeburg Public Library	Fryeburg	Oxford	15	0	0	15
Lovell Historical Society	Lovell	Oxford	49	0	26	75
Norway Historical Society	Norway	Oxford	15	0	14	29
Otisfield Historical Society	Otisfield	Oxford	29	0	3	32
Waterford Historical Society	Waterford	Oxford	56	0	1	57
Garland Historical Society	Garland	Penobscot	43	0	1	44
Baxter State Park	Millinocket	Penobscot	3	0	0	3
Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society	Dover-Foxcroft	Piscataquis	1	0	0	1
Monson Historical Society	Guilford	Piscataquis	4	0	0	4
Maine Maritime Museum	Bath	Sagadahoc	14	0	0	14
Patten Free Library	Bath	Sagadahoc	1	0	10	11
L.C. Bates Museum/ Good Will-Hinckley	Hinckley	Somerset	18	0	0	18
Norridgewock Historical Society	Norridgewock	Somerset	13	0	2	15
Margaret Chase Smith Library Center	Skowhegan	Somerset	20	0	0	20
Skowhegan History House	Skowhegan	Somerset	81	0	107	188
Davistown Museum	Hulls Cove	Waldo	8	0	1	9
Lubec Historical Society	Lubec	Washington	3	0	1	4
Porter Memorial Library	Machias	Washington	2	0	0	2
Milbridge Historical Society Museum	Milbridge	Washington	2	0	0	2
Steuben Historical Society	Steuben	Washington	1	1	5	6
Acton-Shapleigh Historical Society	Acton	York	2	0	0	2
Franco-Amer. Geneal. Soc. Of York Co	Biddeford	York	5	0	2	7
McArthur Public Library	Biddeford	York	23	0	6	29
Cornish Historical Society	Cornish	York	12	0	12	24
Eliot Baha'i Archives	Eliot	York	47	0	1	48
Seashore Trolley Museum	Kennebunkport	York	11	0	2	13
Limington Historical Society	Limington	York	14	0	2	16
Sanford Historical Committee	Sanford	York	115	0	0	115
TOTAL			3963	141	678	4641

Source: MMN Staff

Participating partners report that the site has increased awareness of their resources throughout the state.

Interviews and surveys reveal that some of the participating partners believe that their involvement in MMN has enhanced interest in their collections from throughout the state. One user of the site noted, “Making our museum’s documents and photos available to all interested parties has resulted in awareness of our collection within the state.” Another user said, “As a contributing partner, MMN has increased inquiries on the history of our institution or those associated with the institution.”

Outcome 2: To Facilitate Educational Uses for Online Historic Resources Both in and out of the Classroom

The Maine Memory Network seems to be reaching its target of engaging the educational community in the state and in using the Maine Memory Network as a vehicle for learning.

Within Maine, many users are from the educational community.

There is some evidence that the MMN is becoming seen as a major resource for the educational community. According to the survey of users of the MMN, teachers within Maine make up close to 25 percent of the resident users of the site.

Table 7: Reason for Visit			
	Non-Residents	Residents	Total
Student	7.4%	9.3%	8.6%
Teacher	4.9%	22.3%	16.1%
Source: MMN User Survey			

Many of the teachers in the user survey reported that they were on the site to check it out for their students or to develop curriculum. The students reported that they were working on school-related projects.

A number of schools have begun to use the MMN as an important learning tool.

The survey of users of the MMN, as well as the teacher survey, has provided evidence of the growing interest amongst educators in using the MMN as a learning tool. Many teachers and student users of MMN commented in the survey about how useful MMN has been to their work. For example,

- ▲ One teacher “user” reported, “Our school is developing a plan for utilizing this amazing site. We are THRILLED with all of the prospects for using this for teaching Maine History.”
- ▲ One student user noted, “I have loved this site since we were told about it and it really makes a difference on how I look up stuff about Maine. The first place we all check in my grade now is this website for info. We have laptops so we can

easily get to it. I love it. Thanks for making it such a useful website.” 8th grade student from Bar Harbor, Maine.

The teachers and educators who were surveyed directly about their use of the MMN also reported that they were using the site as a learning tool.

- ▲ An elementary school teacher reported that she was using the MMN to search for sources to use in a Civil War unit for 5th graders. She also asked her students to use the MMN to search for possible information about Sagadahoc County Civil War soldiers. This teacher concluded, “I am thrilled with the opportunities that MMN provides for my students and me. It is an opportunity that allows all Mainers to have equal access and to make contributions that everyone can share.”
- ▲ An 8th grade teacher noted that the MMN helped her students to achieve Maine State Learning Results since “They have been able to study Maine history through the use of primary sources and pictures and to create PowerPoint presentations and reports to summarize information.”
- ▲ A few school librarians responding to the survey noted that they were using the site in lessons about using primary sources.

The MMN is increasingly being seen as part of the state’s educational infrastructure.

There are two areas in which the Maine Memory Network has become incorporated in the larger state educational infrastructure:

1. First, the MMN is being considered an important ingredient in the state of Maine “Laptop Initiative.” Maine is the first state to embark upon a plan to eliminate the digital divide by providing a laptop to every 7th and 8th grade student and teacher. Now that the state has invested in the technology, the focus has shifted to the “content.” In other words, there is considerable interest in making sure that the laptops are being effectively utilized to help meet the state’s educational goals. The MMN staff have been working with the Digital Maine Learning Group to explore potential content related to the Laptop Initiative.
2. Second, the MMN has been involved in enhancing the curriculum related to the new Maine Studies effort. Most notably, the MMN has tied its site to the statewide Maine textbook *Finding Katadin*. MMN currently has over 200 items on the Network that are related to the textbook. Again, providing evidence of its commitment to quality, the staff of MMN have gone beyond simply putting these items online. They have also created materials to accompany the images and have advised teachers about how they can use the items in the classroom setting. The MMN staff plan to put a 500-page corresponding book online in the future.

Much of the ongoing work related to education is associated with the MMN’s ILMS grant.

Outcome 3: To Benefit the Cause of History and to Increase Community Pride

It is very difficult to measure the progress of the MMN in promoting the importance of history to residents of Maine and to using state and local historical knowledge as a means of building community pride. When asked about the impacts of participation in the MMN, however, many of the contributing partners did point to these types of benefits. For example, 18 percent noted that they believed that their participation in MMN enhanced the community's self-image.

**Table 8: Contributing Partners:
Impacts of Participation in MMN**

Increased number of visitors to facility	10.5%
Improved relationships with other organizations in community	23.7%
Increased financial viability of your organization	5.3%
Increased technical capacity of your organization	31.6%
Increased visibility & knowledge of organization in community	36.8%
Enhanced community's image of itself	18.4%
Enhanced quality of public education in community	15.8%
Ability to leverage or raise any additional outside funding	7.9%
*Respondents selected multiple answers so total adds to more than 100%.	
Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' MMN Contributing Partners Survey	

While this is a largely “subjective” measure, a number of the individuals surveyed, as well as those interviewed, reported that they believed the Network led to increased interest in the state's history and recognition of the relevance of learning from this history. Every educator surveyed reported that the MMN encouraged them to learn more about historical resources in their communities. One-third of the educators responding to the survey reported that as a

result of the MMN they have visited or worked with historical organizations in their community. Maine Historical Society staff also noted that they believe that the MMN has

Building Community Pride:

Skowhegan Area Middle School: Local Heritage Project

The coordinator of the 7th grade laptop program at the Skowhegan Area Middle Schools was looking for a project based on local history. She contacted the MMN staff and learned more about the Network and the resources available through MMN. With her students, she then visited the Skowhegan History House, which had a large amount of old photos and other materials. Working with the local Curator and a local photographer, students got directly involved in the scanning, uploading, and cataloguing of the images. Individuals from the Skowhegan History House bring bins of photographs to the school. At the school, students working with their laptops will scan the items. Students have also transcribed some letters written by a Civil War soldier and have uploaded images of the originals plus the transcriptions. This activity has given the students a new appreciation of their community and its history. Recently, students have been motivated enough to organize an effort to stop a local historic building from being torn down.

led to an exponential increase in interest of people coming to use the Historical Society's library in Portland.

There is evidence that the MMN has also led to a more collaborative environment and has encouraged building new relationships at the community level. The survey asked contributing partners to rate their levels of collaboration before and after their involvement in the MMN. The results indicated that some of the local partners believed that their involvement with the MMN led to improved relationships with other institutions. Of the 32 organizations responding to this question, four noted improved relationships with other local nonprofits, two improved relationships with local schools, and four improved relationships with other statewide organizations.

MMN is also now part of a network of institutions within Maine that is working more collaboratively on a range of issues:

- ▲ In July 2003, the Maine Humanities Council launched an initiative to celebrate the life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The two-year project was funded with an \$185,000 grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities and involved 24 educators from Maine and five from Massachusetts. The goal of the project is to create a "Longfellow in the Classroom" Website that will be located on the Maine Memory Network. According to staff at the Humanities Council, its partnership with MMN has been an important component of this grant.
- ▲ The Digital Maine Learning Group is working to build the "content" side of the state laptop initiative. The MMN is working on content for 8th graders.
- ▲ MMN is working with the Wabanacki Studies Commission in trying to make Native American studies an integral part of social studies education in Maine. MMN is working with the Commission to help provide material on its areas of study.
- ▲ MMN is working with the University of Maine to create content for broadband distribution as part of a distance-learning network.

Outcome 4: To Increase the Capacity of Small Historical and Cultural Institutions throughout Maine

As noted, the Maine Memory Network could have focused its activities solely on getting documents online. If this had been its priority, the design of the Network would have been fundamentally different. First, MMN would have emphasized incentives for getting larger cultural institutions to participate. Second, staff would have done the scanning and cataloguing themselves. However, very early in the development of the Network, the staff saw that achieving the longer-term outcomes noted above could best be achieved if they were able to build the capacity of the smaller cultural institutions, particularly those in the more remote parts of the state.

Clearly, this focus had its cost. But, evidence suggests that the approach has had an impact on building the capacity of cultural institutions in the state. The response of the contributing partners, when asked about the impacts of their participation in the MMN, reveals that, for many, they experienced a range of "capacity"-related outcomes. For

example, 37 percent noted that their participation in the MMN increased the visibility and knowledge of their organization in the wider community, and another 32 percent noted that their participation increased their technological capacity. A smaller number indicated that it increased visitation to their facility, improved their relationships with other organizations in their community, and helped them to leverage other funding.

When asked specifically about their technological capacity, it was clearly in the areas of digitizing items and uploading them onto the Internet that capacity was most affected. However, for a large number of organizations, it also increased their overall knowledge of copyright and other regulations governing the use of historic items. (See Table 9.)

Table 9: Contributing Partners: Increased Technological Capacity		
Understanding basic computer applications	20.0%	N=30
Knowledge of the Internet	17.2%	N=29
Scanning and digitization of historic items	46.7%	N=30
Ability to upload historic items	56.7%	N=30
Knowledge of Copyright and other regulations	43.3%	N=30
Knowledge of items to be catalogued	23.3%	N=30
<i>Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' Survey of Contributing Partners.</i>		

In addition to improving their technological capacity, the survey also found that a larger percentage of the contributing partners believed that the assistance from MMN staff helped them to improve their preservation practices. (See Table 10.)

Table 10: Contributing Partners: Impact of MMN Staff Assistance on Preservation Practices	
Significantly improved our practices	15.6%
Moderately improved our practices	25.0%
Slightly improved our practices	21.9%
Did not improve our practices	37.5%
N=32	
<i>Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' Survey of Contributing Partners.</i>	

Interviews with staff of the cultural institutions found that MMN has also increased the capacity of some of the larger organizations. For example, staff at the Maine Maritime Museum, one of the largest museums in the state, noted that its work with MMN, “Expanded our ability to get our own collection accessible on the Web. We hadn’t done it on our own Website before because we did not have the technical ability.” Another

museum in the state, the Owls Head Transportation Museum, is working on doing something similar on its site. It saw the MMN as a model of what the museum wanted to do on a smaller scale. The museum also noted that it was using some of the images from MMN in its exhibition, *A Century Ago: Traveling in Maine in the Wright Era*.

Another indication of the MMN's commitment to building capacity and its impact on the state has been the workshops that it has run throughout Maine. One of the workshops, *The Historical Image in the Digital Age*, included a presentation by a local attorney on copyright laws. The session had 110 participants from throughout the state. These workshops, as well as the MMN Training Manual and the one-on-one technical assistance, have all served to build the state technological infrastructure—helping a wide range of cultural institutions to enter the digital age.

Outcome 5: To Increase the Capacity of the Maine Historical Society in a Number of Areas

While it was not an anticipated outcome of the MMN, as the Network has evolved it has become a much more integrated component of the Maine Historical Society and has had the following impacts on the Society itself:

- ▲ There is increased recognition of the importance of the “education” mission to the Maine Historical Society. This increased recognition has resulted in the promotion of the part-time staff person hired by MMN for education outreach to become the Education Director of the Society as a whole. This represents a shift in terms of the larger organization. The Society has now refocused attention to its education mission and, with the MMN, now has increased capacity to provide and support effective education programs in the state.
- ▲ There is increased integration in terms of museum exhibits and online content on the MMN. Staff of the MMN will now be involved in the design of the physical exhibits associated with the Society. The Project Historian hired for the MMN will now be playing a related role in helping with the development of exhibits at the other facilities of the Society. In the future, the online exhibits of the MMN will be the same as the physical exhibits at the Museum.
- ▲ MMN will provide the Society with increased capacity in terms of the production of materials, the dissemination of material, and the longevity of their impacts. As just one example, there will now be a home in cyberspace for all of the exhibits that are developed. In the past, once an exhibit closed, its content was no longer available.
- ▲ Because of the MMN and the capacity of its staff, other elements of the Society are beginning to recognize the potential of digitization. This is the case in the library, which has begun to explore putting a number of its databases, such as voter registrations records, online. These databases are of considerable interest to genealogists throughout the world. In addition to digitizing databases, the technological capacity of MMN staff has been useful in terms of the organizational capacity of the MHS. For example, this technological capacity has been used to set up an online store and to enable the MHS to sell tickets for its events online.

Outcome 6: To Influence Other Digitization Efforts around the United States and to Serve as a Model for Similar Efforts in Other States and Regions

A review of the survey of users found a number of examples of visitors to the site who are using the Maine Memory Network as a model for their efforts. For example, users of the MMN reported:

- ▲ “I am looking for good website models for a new museum.”
- ▲ “Your website is very user friendly, we are looking at it as a model for updating our own.”
- ▲ “The Maine Memory Network is a wonderful example that we hope to follow on a smaller scale.”
- ▲ “I am a consulting archivist using your digitization project as a model for other historic societies.”

Maine Memory Network staff have also been asked to make presentations about the Network at many workshops. For example, the Network was highlighted at the Convention on Museums and the Web 2003.

There is also evidence that the MMN has been a model for other similar digitization activities. According to its Website, Inland Northwest Memories, a regional database of electronic versions of historical documents from eastern Washington, northern Idaho, northeastern Oregon, and western Montana, “is based on the work of the Maine Memory Network and owes much to their conceptualization.”

CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Findings

The evidence to date is that the Maine Memory Network has been a very professionally run project that has made considerable progress in building the state of Maine's cultural and educational infrastructure. Surveys that were completed by "users" of the site, current contributing partners, potential contributing partners, and educators in the state present strong evidence that the services provided have been of very high quality and that the efforts of MMN staff have been very well received throughout Maine. As noted, the staff made a conscious decision early in the project's evolution to focus their efforts on building the capacity of smaller cultural institutions, and to focus on the quality of the items on the site, rather than the quantity of items on the site. There are some who believe that through this orientation the MMN is likely to have a more long-lasting impact on the state's cultural infrastructure. However, this has come at the cost of substantially slowing down progress on meeting the MMN's objectives in terms of the volume of items on the site. In summary, this evaluation found:

- ▲ Due to its focus on quality and capacity building, MMN has fallen far short of achieving its goal in terms of number of documents on the site.
- ▲ The MMN has helped to build the technological, as well as archival, capacity of small cultural institutions in the state.
- ▲ The MMN has not been as successful in engaging the larger cultural institutions in the state.
- ▲ The MMN has been successful in engaging both partners and users from the more remote and rural parts of the state, thereby addressing geographic barriers to the use and appreciation of important historical and cultural information.
- ▲ The MMN is beginning to become part of the educational infrastructure of the state and has been increasingly linked to the Maine State Learning Results.
- ▲ The MMN has also led to increased capacity at the Maine Historical Society and has served as a national model to other organizations interested in putting historical materials online.

Factors Affecting the Success of the Maine Memory Network

There are a number of factors that have clearly contributed to the success of the Maine Memory Network in achieving some of the impacts that have been noted in this evaluation. Most notably:

From all accounts, as well as the experience of the evaluation team, the quality and commitment of the MMN staff has been outstanding

Without exception, the individuals who have had contact with the MMN staff have been extremely positive about the experience. Even those individuals who have decided

not to actively participate in the MMN have noted that the staff have been very capable and very engaging. In each of the surveys, the respondents rated their experience with the staff very highly and many noted in their comments how helpful the staff have been. Clearly, the quality of the staff has created much goodwill, as well as helped the Network to involve a broad spectrum of organizations in the site.

Having the parent organization, the Maine Historical Society, has helped to incubate and grow the Maine Memory Network.

As part of a very well-established cultural institution, MMN had an existing institutional base that has been important to its evolution. Not only has the Maine Historical Society provided significant staff and organizational support to the Network, but its archival materials form the foundation of the MMN. Moreover, the Historical Society has a longstanding constituency that MMN has been able to build upon. From existing relationships with small and large cultural institutions, to its library and outreach materials, the organizational home of the MMN has been a factor in its success.

The commitment to outreach throughout the state has led to broadening the geographic scope of the Network.

In order to meet one of its primary outcomes, eliminating geographic barriers, MMN realized that it would have to undertake an aggressive outreach effort that could not be centered in Portland or Augusta. In order to reach the smaller cultural institutions, the MMN made a commitment, through its part-time outreach staff, of meeting with and engaging organizations from throughout the state of Maine. This commitment paid off in many ways. In a state in which those that live in the more remote, rural regions are quick to criticize any statewide effort, the response to the MMN has been very positive.

One-on-one technical assistance has been critical to building capacity.

As noted, in their effort to build the capacity of small cultural institutions the MMN, staff have provided one-on-one technical assistance. Many of those surveyed and interviewed noted that this assistance has been very useful and has helped to build their own capacity, both in terms of technology and in terms of archival techniques.

Successful marketing and outreach activities have increased usage and knowledge of the MMN.

MMN has not limited its marketing and outreach to passive efforts such as mailings and linkages to other Websites. The MMN staff have sponsored workshops throughout Maine (as well as nationally) and have publicized their efforts widely in newsletters and through the media. The result is that there is growing awareness of the MMN in both the cultural community as well as the educational community.

Challenges Faced by the MMN

The surveys and interviews revealed some of the key challenges that MMN has faced as it has tried to achieve the outcomes that it set. Most of the following challenges relate to the barriers that the MMN staff have faced as they have tried to engage partners and get documents on the site:

Lack of staff capacity is the major reason that organizations have been slow in participating in the Network and in getting materials online.

Interviews with both small and larger cultural organizations in Maine, as well as the surveys of organizations, revealed that the lack of staff time to scan and catalogue documents has been the most significant challenge that MMN has faced. When asked why it took so long to get material online, a number of the partners said that they simply lacked the staff time to do it. In the survey, over half of the contributing partners and the potential partners noted that staff time was a barrier to their participation in the MMN. (See Table 11.)

Table 11: Barriers to Participation in MMN		
	Contributing Partners	Potential Partners
Costs	10.5%	13.8%
Appropriate Equipment	13.2%	30.0%
Technological Knowledge	18.4%	22.5%
Staff Time	57.9%	53.8%
Not Sure of Benefit to My Organization	7.9%	27.5%
Other	31.6%	N/A
*Respondents selected multiple answers, so total adds to more than 100%.		
Source: Mt. Auburn Associates' MMN Contributing and Potential Partner Surveys.		

When asked about some ideas to increase participation, a number of the survey respondents focused on issues related to personnel and time availability. For example, 82 percent of the contributing partners surveyed revealed that an intern would alleviate some of the staff time issues.

Technological capacity, as well as lack of knowledge and interest in the Internet, has also been a barrier for smaller organizations.

Many small cultural organizations in Maine have very small staffs or are often run by volunteers. Many of the individuals involved are older and have very limited experience and interest in the Internet. They do not understand the need for putting items online or are, in some cases, somewhat intimidated by computers. Interviews with some of the smaller cultural organizations confirmed that many are simply uninterested, as well as unknowledgeable, about how the Internet works. Moreover, many do not appreciate the

benefits associated with digitizing their archival material. For others, there is interest in participating in the MMN, but they simply have neither the technological skill nor access to the equipment that they would need to put their documents online.

Competition, as well as lack of clarity about potential benefits to participation, has been a major barrier to more fully engaging the larger cultural institutions in the state.

When the MMN was established, there was an assumption that the large cultural institutions in Maine would contribute a significant amount of items to put online. In fact, it is with the larger institutions that some of the greatest barriers have been faced. Interviews revealed:

- ▲ Larger cultural institutions often had their own Websites and their limited time and resources were being spent on getting their collections on their own sites;
- ▲ There was a sense that, to some degree, MMN was a competitor. Larger institutions did not understand what the benefits would be to them of putting their collection on the MMN site.
- ▲ MMN did not initially provide links to other organizations' Websites, thus further constraining the interest of the larger institutions.
- ▲ Large organizations have such vast collections that they cannot possibly upload any significant part of the collection. It takes time just to decide what images are worth scanning. One staff person noted, "If you have 40,000 images, it would take a lot of time just to decide what to put on MMN."

In some ways, one of the greatest barriers that MMN faced in getting a larger quantity of items online was that it did not make an effective case for participation to the larger cultural institutions in the state. It now needs to think more creatively about how to "sell" participation in the MMN to those institutions that have the largest volume of archival documents or to revise how it is asking these institutions to participate in the Network. To some extent, MMN may need to rethink this relationship.

The focus on quality has had a huge impact on the volume of items online.

Many of the individuals surveyed and interviewed noted that the most time-consuming element of the MMN process is related to putting together the information and text related to the items that they want to put online. Because of the high standards of the MMN, there are many items that have been scanned, but have not gone onto the site because they do not yet have the text associated with them. Often, the small cultural institutions do not have the capacity to document the items. If MMN wants to maintain a high level of quality, and yet increase the quantity of items online, it needs to think more creatively about mechanisms for supporting the cataloguing and analysis of items.